



PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • 29 APRIL 2020

Non-Citizen Health is Public Health

Non-citizens in Malaysia are vulnerable to Covid-19 and other illnesses due to their high-density living quarters and working areas, and a lack of access to information and healthcare. Maintaining good health in these communities is important to protect the health of the Rakyat. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the health of non-citizens are appropriately looked after.

The Malaysian Health Coalition (MHC) alongside Beyond Borders Malaysia, the Malaysian Consultative Council of Islamic Organisations (MAPIM) and TENAGANITA urge the government to introduce the following measures to protect the health of all residents in Malaysia:

1. Provide Education & Access to Healthcare

All stakeholders must work to improve the awareness and understanding of Covid-19 among migrant and refugee communities. Education and prevention information must be in languages and media that they can access easily and understand. Migrant and refugee communities must also feel secure enough to seek medical assistance should they require it. In this, we laud the Health Ministry's approach of targeted testing for migrant populations.

2. Provide a Safe Workplace

As the country begins a phased restart of businesses and industry, sectors that are reliant on migrant workers must establish clear guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOP) for maintaining the health of its employees. These guidelines and SOPs must be developed together with the Health Ministry. Enforcement must be built into the guidelines, together with penalties for non-compliance. As evidence surrounding the use of face masks emerges, the Malaysian government and businesses must also respond appropriately.

3. Moratorium on Evictions

The government should introduce a moratorium on all evictions for all residents in Malaysia. This will not only support Malaysians during this crisis, but also help refugee and migrant communities that are unable to pay rent. The existing moratorium on loans and mortgages in the country will cushion any impact on landlords. Housing is a human right that should be protected to allow all people to abide by the movement control order (MCO) and limit the spread of the virus.

Covid-19 affects everyone no matter their place of birth or citizenship. For the disease to fully be eradicated in the country, we must care for everyone's health.

This Statement was updated on 13 May 2020 to include the following sentence:

We acknowledge the results of a survey done on over 400 refugees and foreign workers by Refugees Coalition of Malaysia (RCOM) in April 2020 to understand the scale of rental pressures caused by the MCO and threat of evictions.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA

29 April 2020

Signatories:

Malaysian Health Coalition

45 Member Societies & 19 Individuals

Full Signature List on myhealthcoalition.org

Beyond Borders Malaysia

www.beyondbordersmalaysia.org

Malaysian Consultative Council of Islamic Organisations (MAPIM)

www.mapim.org

Refugee Coalition of Malaysia (RCOM)

www.facebook.com/RefugeeCoalitionMY/

TENAGANITA

www.tenaganita.net